

SUBJECT: Letter of Instruction (LOI) for the AY2015 Army Post Graduate Year (PGY-1) Program

The PGY-1 program is the gateway into Army medicine for the majority of Medical Corps officers. It is the next stage in your professional development. Our desire is to further each student's professional development while meeting the needs of the Army and your cooperation with the PGY-1 application process is the best way to achieve these results. The information contained in this LOI is intended to guide you through the PGY-1 process.

1. APPLICATION REQUIREMENT:

Civilian Medical Students: In addition to the Armed Forces medical students applying for Army PGY-1, qualified civilian students are eligible to apply if they meet the following criteria:

- (1) Are a US citizen.
- (2) Are in the final year of medical school in the US or Puerto Rico, which is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) or American Osteopathic Association.
- (3) Have passed steps/levels 1 & 2 (CK and CS/CE and PE) of the USMLE or COMLEX exams.
- (4) Agree to immediately withdraw from the civilian match or cease pursuit of civilian residency training upon acceptance of military GME.
- (5) Meet appointment and accession criteria for service as an active duty Medical Corps officer which includes passing a physical examination and obtaining a security clearance.
- (6) Sign a service agreement upon accepting training.
- (7) If selected to an Army PGY-1 program and selected by the Medical Corps Accessions Board, accept a Captain's Oath and participate in a commissioning ceremony for entry onto active duty in the Army Medical Corps.

Failure on the part of a civilian applicant to meet any of the above requirements will result in the withdrawal of his or her application/selection by the Army. Graduates of foreign medical schools, even if they are U.S. citizens, are not eligible to apply for Army PGY-1,

2. TRAINING PROGRAMS: Army PGY-1 includes both categorical and Transitional Year programs. A categorical PGY-1 program is considered the first year of training in the specialty and counts toward board certification. The Transitional Year is a year of preliminary training required for specialties that do not have categorical PGY-1 (i.e. Anesthesiology or Radiology). All PGY-1 programs in the Army are depicted on the **Training Locations Grid** found on this website. Additionally, there is a **Fact Sheet** (located under the 'General Info' tab of this website) that provides a description and pertinent application information for each of these PGY-1 training specialties.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS: This is a two-step process that consists of submitting (a) an application for Army PGY-1 programs using the Electronic Residency Application System (ERAS) as well as; (b) completing all supplementary Army PGY-1 application requirements through this website. The processes for each are as follows:

a. ERAS Application:

(1) **Purpose** - MyERAS contains work areas for completing the basic application and personal statement, selecting desired training programs, and assigning supporting documents all of which are pertinent for your Army PGY-1 application.

(2) **Access** - Your ERAS application is submitted through a web-based application called MyERAS accessible via <https://services.aamc.org/eras/myeras2015/>. You must register with MyERAS using a token that is obtained from your medical school's student affairs office; you should contact the appropriate person in that office if you have any questions about using ERAS.

(3) **Program Designation** - You must submit your ERAS application to all Army PGY-1 programs that offer training in your specialty goal (consistent with your Army PGY-1 Preference Priority Form). The '**Army ERAS Program ID**' **worksheet**, found under the 'General Info' tab of this website, should be used to ensure that you have assigned the appropriate Army specialty programs to your ERAS application.

a. A copy of your application will automatically be forwarded to the Army Graduate Medical Education (GME) office for our records.

(4) **Supporting Document Submission** – All supporting documents must be submitted to your medical school's student affairs office. Once you have completed and paid for your MyERAS application, your medical school's student affairs office will be notified that you have used your token and that you have applied to residency programs. That office will then attach your required documents and transmit your completed application to the ERAS post office for transmission to the programs you have designated.

a. **Medical Licensure Examination:** Army policy mandates that all students take Steps 1, 2 CK and 2 CS of the USMLE or Levels 1, 2-CE, and 2-PE of the COMLEX. Civilian should forward the results of their Step I and Step 2 CK and CS/CE and PE to the PGY-1 Program Manager at usarmy.ncr.hqda-otsg.mbx.otsg-gme@mail.mil. All students must also electronically attach Step 1 and Step 2 CK or Level 1 and Level 2-CE scores to their MyERAS application. Step 2 CS or Level 2-PE **must** be taken by **1 November 2014** with results provided by **15 February 2015**.

b. **Letters of Recommendation:** These documents must be attached to your MyERAS application by your medical school's student affairs office. ERAS authorizes you to submit a maximum of four letters. You must ensure that they are received by that office in time to be attached to your application by **15 October 2014**. This will ensure that they are considered by the programs ranking your application.

Letters of recommendation from Army physicians can increase your competitiveness for Army programs.

c. **Personal Statement:** Statements submitted in ERAS must be your own composition; plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students who submit plagiarized personal

statements (such as from internet websites) will face serious repercussions and must expect this to be taken into consideration when the match is conducted.

(5) **Deadline** - The deadline date for receipt of MyERAS Army program applications is **15 October 2014**, (except for the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE)/ Dean's Letter which will be submitted by your medical school's student affairs office on or around 1 October 2014). Please work with your medical school's student affairs office to ensure they have sufficient time to meet this deadline. You should verify that your application was transmitted successfully to ensure that programs have the documents needed to review your application.

b) Army PGY-1 Website Requirements:

(1) **Purpose** - The PGY-1 portion of the Army medical education website is used to submit the required, Army specific application documents (preference priority list, deferment information form, pre-accession form) critical to conducting the Match.

(2) **Access** - Your Army PGY-1 application documents are submitted via the MODS website (www.mods.army.mil/medicaleducation). You must logon to the PGY-1 portion of the website using your assigned logon ID and self-created password.

(3) Required Documents -

a. **Rank Order List:** The **Army PGY-1 Preference Priority List** is utilized to designate your specialty goal and rank your programs for the Army match process. Your specialty goal must be consistent with the programs that you rank. You are required to rank all advertised Army training locations associated with your specialty goal for the PGY-1 match; these must be the same Army programs designated in MyERAS. Any application not listing all programs in the specialty area will be considered incomplete and will be returned to the applicant for completion.

- For specialty goals with **fewer** than five Army locations, you must rank a minimum of five Army programs. You may list more than five programs.

- For specialty goals with **more** than five Army locations (Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, General Surgery, Orthopaedics, Urology, Prelim Anesthesiology, Prelim Ophthalmology), you must rank all available locations offered for your specialty goal.

Consider your rankings carefully, if you have any questions please get in touch with the Army GME office (PGY-1 Program Manager) for assistance. We will attempt to review all rankings to ensure that they are consistent with your specialty goal. We will contact you to resolve any inconsistencies. Our goal is to match each student in the program of their choice and we assume your rankings accurately reflect your true desires.

Your rankings are confidential. The Army GME office does not tell program directors how a student ranked their program. The only information a program director has is that the student ranked the program as one of their choices for the Match. If program

directors ask students as part of the interview process about their rankings, students are not to divulge this information. Nor should students volunteer their program rankings. Furthermore, there should be no provision of any documents other than a curriculum vitae by applicants to program directors (board scores, grades, transcripts, etc should be neither asked for nor volunteered). Any requests for such should be reported to the GME office. This directive is to ensure a fair and unbiased process consistent with board proceedings.

b. **Pre-accession Information Form:** This is an Army specific form that must be submitted as part of your PGY-1 application. It provides information that is used to prepare your orders, appointment letter, and oath of office when entering active duty. It is also used to run the Match. Therefore, it is imperative that this information be as accurate and current as possible and that it be received by the posted deadline date of **15 October 2014**.

c. **Civilian students:** are required to obtain a military physical as part of their appointment for commissioning as an Army officer.

d. **Service Agreement & 2LT Oath copies:**

- **Civilian students:** are not required to have these as part of the application process, however will be required to execute them if selected for Army PGY-1 training.

4. **DEADLINES:** All application materials (MyERAS, Preference Priority List, Deferment Information Form, and Pre-accession Form) must be received by the Army GME office by **15 October 2014**. Changes may be made to the documents up until this date but **none will be accepted after 15 October 2014**.

If you need to reprioritize your location preferences after **15 October 2014**, you may submit an email request to the PGY-1 Program Manager (see paragraph 11) detailing your new rank order list. This request can only change the rankings of the training locations that you have submitted and **CANNOT** change your specialty goal. These changes will be processed through **31 October 2014**. After **31 October 2014**, all access to the PGY-1 website will be prohibited until the results of the PGY-1 match are communicated to the applicants in mid-December 2014. **Please check all Preference Priority List changes sent to the PGY-1 Program Manager after 15 October ASAP. Make sure the changes on the PPL are as you submitted. Do not wait until you see your match results to inform the PGY-1 Program Manager that your PPL is incorrect.**

5. **INTERVIEWS:** Interviews are an important part of the application and selection process. It is your responsibility to arrange the interviews with the program directors of your desired training programs. If you are not able to interview in person, a telephonic interview may serve as a reasonable alternative. Schedule this ahead of time to ensure you have the focused attention of the program director. It is recommended that you provide curriculum vitae to the program director for reference during the interview. **Curriculum vitae are the only document that a program director can request and an applicant can supply. If you are interested in a specialty which does not have a categorical PGY-1 year, you should interview with both the**

specialty program director and the Transitional Year, or other preliminary year, program director as both will be involved in the ranking process.

6. CONTINUOUS GME TRAINING CONTRACT: In some cases, those desiring to train beyond the PGY-1 must apply for the additional specialty training. For most specialties, however, we offer a continuous training contract. This process allows a medical student to be considered and selected for a graduate medical education (GME) program leading to specialty board certification in their chosen specialty without having to submit a separate application for post-graduate year level 2 (PGY-2) and above training.

The Army offers continuous training in the specialties of Anesthesiology, Dermatology, Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, General Surgery, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Neurosurgery, OB-GYN, Ophthalmology, Orthopaedics, Otolaryngology, Pathology, Pediatrics, Physical Medicine, Psychiatry, Radiology (Diagnostic), and Urology.

The Army will offer all students who are selected for these designated specialties the option of entering into a contract for the entire duration of their specialty training (continuous training contract) if they have passed all parts of their respective licensing exams. Students may accept the offer of training for the entire length of the residency or indicate their preference to perform only the PGY-1 with the Army.

- Continuous training contracts will be issued after entry onto active duty with the contingency that trainees meet the Army's Physical Fitness Test (APFT) and Height/Weight standards. If a trainee fails to meet APFT and Height/Weight standards or does not pass Step III by the start of their PGY-2 year, they will be placed on a leave of absence until they become compliant.

- If the continuous training option is accepted, an individual may still withdraw from the continuous training contract, after beginning PGY-1 training, if career or personal goals change. The individual may apply for PGY-2 training as long as their withdrawal is accepted and processed by **15 September 2015**, otherwise they will begin serving their obligated time as a General Medical Officer (GMO) at the completion of the PGY-1.

- If the PGY-1 only option is selected, the individual may still apply for PGY-2 training according to the standard process or may begin serving their obligated time as a GMO at the completion of the PGY-1.

7. SELECTION PROCESS: Selection for Army PGY-1 is done using a computerized match similar to the process used by the NRMP. The algorithm used for the match gives preference to the student's rankings while considering where Army position fills need to occur. It is modified occasionally to ensure that fairness and objectivity are applied to the Match. The process is designed to give the best possible match for the student and programs. Historical data indicates that about 75% - 85% of students will match with their first or second choice program. The match results are reviewed by the program directors during the Joint Service Graduate Medical Education Selection Board to be held the week of **2-5 December 2014**. At the conclusion of the

board, the Surgeon General of the Army must approve the results in order for them to become official.

8. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS: The anticipated release date of the results of the PGY-1 selections is **17 December 2014**. Results of the match will be posted on the PGY-1 website on the release date (in the student's file under the match tab). Students will need to use their assigned logon IDs and passwords to access their match results. Students will receive an official PGY-1 selection letter with an enclosed acknowledgment form by **30 January 2015**. In order to finalize the Army match process, this acknowledgment form must be completed and returned to the Army GME office by the posted deadline date stated in the PGY-1 selection letter.

If selected for Army PGY-1, students must withdraw from the NRMP/AOA or any other match arrangement.

9. PGY-1 TRAINING REQUIREMENT: The completion of PGY-1 training (becoming medical license eligible) is a condition of service in the Medical Corps (MC). Failure to complete this MC branch requirement will result in a re-branch to another Corps in the Army with the appropriate reduction in rank or initiation of separation procedures with recoupment of funds. Once an officer in another Corps, you will no longer be eligible to apply for specialty training in the Army Medical Corps. This must be factored into any decision to withdraw out of PGY-1 training prior to the completion of this training year.